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STRONG VINCENT

AND

HIS BRIGADE AT GETTYSBURG

JULY 2, 1863

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FROM

Oliver W. Norton.

STRONG VINCENT

AND

His Brigade at Gettysburg

JULY 2, 1863

OLIVER W. NORTON

Private Eighty-third Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers

First Lieutenant Eighth Regiment U. S. C. Infantry

Ex-Commander Illinois Commandery
Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States

Chicago, December, 1909

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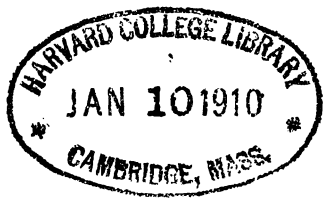
U.S. Serial



STRONG VINCENT

In the numerous histories of the civil war or accounts of the campaign and battle of Gettysburg which have appeared from time to time, the writer of this paper has never seen one which did full justice to the important part enacted by Colonel Strong Vincent and his brigade on the extreme left of the Union Army on the afternoon of July 2, 1863, and which, if it did not decide the victory, contributed so much to it that but for this the battle would have been gained by the Confederates.

Some accounts state that General Warren, observing the importance of the position, entirely unoccupied, and the evident intention of the Confederates to seize it, took the responsibility of detaching Vincent's brigade from its division and personally conducted it to the place where it fought. Other accounts state that Weed's brigade was first placed on the hill by General Warren and that Vincent's brigade came up later and extended the line to the left. All accounts give great credit to Vincent's skill and the splendid fighting of the brigade, but they all miss the point which the writer wishes to make clear in this statement, which is that **If Vincent had not taken upon himself the responsibility of taking his brigade to that position without waiting to receive the order from his division commander as soon as he knew that his corps commander had ordered a brigade to be sent there, the arrival of his brigade would have found the enemy in possession of the ground, from which in all probability it could not have been dislodged.**

It may seem presumptuous for one who at the time of the battle of Gettysburg was a private soldier of the Eighty-third Pennsylvania Volunteers to question the accuracy of accounts written by officers of high rank or historians in civil life whose attainments have so well fitted them to write the story of the battle, but this presumption may be

NOTE.—Where italics are used in these reports they do not appear in the original but are employed by the writer to call special attention to certain statements.

pardoned perhaps when it is known that the writer is the only living person, with the possible exception of a captain on the staff of General Sykes, who saw and heard what took place at the critical moment.

The writer, although a private soldier, was on detached service at the time of the battle of Gettysburg, at the headquarters of the Third Brigade, First Division, Fifth Army Corps, acting as brigade bugler and bearer of the brigade headquarters flag. His duty was when the brigade was in the field to be always near the brigade commander, so that staff officers or others who had business with him could know by the flag where to find him, and to sound on the bugle orders for the brigade, when so directed by its commander.

The First Division, under command of General Barnes, with the other divisions of the corps, arrived on the field early in the morning of July 2 and was massed in rear of the right of the line. It made some changes of position during the day and about the middle of the afternoon, when Longstreet's attack on the Third Corps became very heavy, the Fifth Corps was moved to the left to reinforce the Third Corps. The First Division led the corps and the Third Brigade under Vincent led the division. The column was halted on the low ground in rear of the position of the Third Corps and General Sykes with General Barnes rode forward to select a position for the troops. Sykes and Barnes appear to have separated before any further orders were given to the division. While waiting for orders Vincent saw a captain of General Sykes' staff riding toward him from the front. Vincent, who evidently knew the captain, left the head of his brigade and rode forward to meet him; writer followed closely with the flag. Arriving, Vincent said, "Captain, what are your orders?" Without replying directly, the officer said, "Where is General Barnes?" If Vincent knew he did not answer the question, but said with emphasis, "What are your orders? Give me your orders." The officer replied, "General Sykes directed me to tell General Barnes to send one of his brigades to occupy that hill yonder," pointing to Little Round Top. Without a moment's hesitation Vincent replied, "I will take the responsibility of taking my brigade there."

Vincent was a born soldier. Although not educated at West Point, he entered the service in April, 1861, as Adjutant of the three months' regiment that was raised at Erie, Pa., and upon the reorganization of this regiment, which was mustered into the service of the United States for three years, he became its Lieutenant-Colonel and when its Colonel, John W. McLane, was killed at the battle of Gaines Mill, Vincent succeeded to the command of the regiment. A Harvard man recently admitted to the bar, he had the intellectual qualities which fitted him to command. With his quick eye he appreciated as well as his superior officers the importance to our army of the immediate occupation of that commanding position. General Barnes was not with his division; writer had not seen him since early in the morning. If Vincent knew where he was he also knew that if he waited for the officer of General Sykes' staff to find him and have the order sent through the usual channel, much valuable time would be lost, and it might be too late. At the risk of court martial for taking his brigade away from the division without orders from its commander, but understanding the order of the corps commander that some brigade of the division should be sent to that hill, he assumed the responsibility of taking his brigade there and he did the right thing at the right time. Returning to the brigade, he gave to Colonel Rice, the senior regimental commander, the order to bring on the brigade as rapidly as possible and started for the hill, closely followed by the writer. Arriving at the foot of the northwest slope and finding it impracticable, he skirted the northern base of the ridge, then turned southward along the eastern slope where the ground was less difficult until he reached the point where the high ridge ends and the hill falls away toward the valley, between the two Round Tops. Riding around the large rocks which end the ridge at this point, we came out on the small plateau where the Sixteenth Michigan Regiment was placed in position a little later. We sat on our horses looking out toward the Devils Den and the country toward the Peach Orchard where the battle was then raging fiercely, but in our immediate neighborhood not a Union or Confederate soldier was to be seen. We had been there but a few moments when a shell exploded a few feet to our right, followed by another

about the same distance to the left. Vincent said to me, "They are firing at the flag, go behind the rocks with it." I obeyed and in a few moments he came and dismounting, left his horse with me. He then went over the lower ground on foot, selecting the position in which to place the brigade. I think the regiments which had followed the same route we took, arrived in the following order: Forty-fourth New York, Sixteenth Michigan, Eighty-third Pennslyvania and Twentieth Maine. As the head of the column came up, Vincent said to Colonel Rice, "Form your regiment here, Colonel, with the right at the foot of this rock." Colonel Rice replied, "Colonel, in every previous battle in which we have been engaged, the Forty-fourth and Eighty-third have fought side by side. I wish it could be so today." Vincent appreciated the feeling and answered, "It shall be so, let the Sixteenth pass you." The order was sent back, the Forty-fourth was halted until the Sixteenth had reached its place, then under Vincent's direction the Forty-fourth, Eighty-third and Twentieth took their respective positions and sent out skirmish lines to the front. Up to this time not a shot had been fired nor a Confederate soldier seen on that part of the field, but the skirmishers of the Eighty-third and Forty-fourth soon met the enemy advancing in heavy columns without skirmishers. They came on rapidly following the retirement of our skirmishers, and arriving within short range of our line, opened a heavy fire on the Eighty-third and Forty-fourth. This lasted for some time, when the enemy fell back but re-formed and with additional troops made another assault, this time reaching far enough to our left to involve the Twentieth Maine, but our men could not be moved. While this was taking place, another force, supposed to be the greater part or all of Robertson's brigade of Texas regiments, passed to the north in the low ground between us and the Devils Den, and having gone beyond the line held by the Sixteenth Michigan, turned and advanced directly up the hill to attack this flank of our line. They came with such courage and such overwhelming numbers that the right of the Sixteenth Michigan wavered and broke. Colonel Welch and a large part of the right wing of his regiment left the field, taking his colors with him. In trying to rally these men Colonel Vincent was mortally

wounded and carried to the rear. Just at this time the One hundred and fortieth New York under Colonel O'Rorke arrived on the hill on our right and charged on the exultant enemy. O'Rorke and many of his men were killed and wounded, but the enemy was driven off, our line was re-established under the direction of Colonel Rice, who assumed the command, and no further assaults were made on the right of our line. Hazlett's Battery and the balance of Weed's Brigade, which came up after the One hundred and fortieth New York, extended the line along the crest of the ridge from Vincent's Brigade to its base at the north and held it until the end of the battle. The enemy continued its assaults upon the left of our line, making repeated efforts to turn the flank of Chamberlain's Twentieth Maine, but failed. The account of the battle at this point has been so fully described in the reports quoted elsewhere, that it need not be repeated here.

When the fighting opened the writer left his horse and flag with the horses and servants of the mounted officers of the brigade and obtaining a musket took his place in the nearest point of the line on the right of the Forty-fourth New York and remained there until the fighting ceased; reporting then to Colonel Rice he was directed by him to go to the hospitals in the rear to get ambulances and help to remove our wounded. Having no shoulder straps and being responsible for his brigade flag, he mounted and took that along as his badge of authority. He came to the road which passes east along the northern end of Little Round Top and found that road full of ambulances of the Second, Third and Fifth Corps and field hospitals of these corps located in every convenient spot for more than a mile to the east, but the ambulance officers and surgeons were so fully occupied that he received little immediate encouragement, although later help was sent and our wounded as well as those of the enemy which had fallen into our hands were cared for as well as they could be under the circumstances. Returning he saw Colonel Welch with a large number of the men of the Sixteenth Michigan and the colors of that regiment at the road-side nearly a mile in rear of the battle-field. Being much surprised to see him there, he asked Colonel Welch where the brigade was. Welch replied that

he did not know, that they were driven off the hill and that Colonel Vincent was in that farm house. After conversation with some of the men of the Sixteenth and being satisfied that Colonel Welch was mistaken, he entered the house and found Colonel Vincent on a bed in a room on the first floor. He was very pale and unable to speak, but held out his hand to me, and taking it I expressed in some way my sorrow at seeing him there. When I said "The boys are still there, Colonel," his face was lighted with a smile, but the sight was too painful to me and I hurried back to my place on the hill.

The writer has searched the official records and other accounts and presents herewith extracts from all the official reports relating to this matter, with certain letters and papers relating to the battle on Little Round Top. General Warren is entitled to all the credit which he would claim for himself, but he would be the first to disclaim credit for acts he did not perform. He went to the hill by the order of General Meade, accompanied by two Lieutenants of Engineers and some mounted orderlies. Seeing from his position near the signal station a heavy force of the enemy very near the hill, he sent a written dispatch to General Meade, suggesting that a division be sent there at once. He then went to General Sykes, reported what he had seen and urged him to send there a portion of his corps which was then just arriving. He did not detach Vincent's brigade nor any other brigade, but acted in accordance with his military training by referring the matter to General Sykes commanding the Fifth Corps, the nearest available troops. Sykes promised the troops needed and Warren returned to the signal station, where he found the officer folding his flags and preparing to leave. Warren directed him to remain and to continue waving his flags. He appears to have remained there until Vincent's brigade, which had repulsed the first assaults, seemed likely to be overwhelmed by the additional troops which the enemy was sending. He then descended the hill again and finding Colonel O'Rorke's regiment, the One Hundred and fortieth New York, bringing up the rear of Weed's brigade, the other three regiments with General Weed in advance, having already passed to the front, Warren took the responsi-

bility of detaching O'Rorke's regiment and hurrying it to the crest of the hill, where it arrived just in time to repulse the assault of the Texas troops which had just driven back in disorder the right of the Sixteenth Michigan.

Sykes appears to have ordered first one brigade from the First Division to be sent there and then Weed's brigade of the Second Division, which was following at some distance in the rear, to take position on the hill also. Sykes then went further to the rear to order up Crawford's Third Division. On his return he found that Weed's brigade, with the exception of O'Rorke's regiment, was moving to the front under orders from an officer of General Sickles' staff. He ordered it back to Round Top and Vincent's and Weed's brigades held this position until the fighting was over. Fisher's brigade of the Third Division came up later to reinforce Vincent's brigade, but did not arrive in time to take any active part in the battle.

Extract from General Hunt's paper on the Battle of Gettysburg, in "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Vol. 3, page 307, in which he quotes a letter from General G. K. Warren:

" * * * As soon as General Longstreet's attack commenced, General Warren was sent by General Meade to see to the condition of the extreme left. The duty could not have been intrusted to better hands. Passing along the lines he found Little Round Top, the key of the position, unoccupied except by a signal station. The enemy at the time lay concealed, awaiting the signal for assault, when a shot fired in their direction caused a sudden movement on their part, which, by the gleam of reflected sunlight from their bayonets, revealed their long lines outflanking the position. Fully comprehending the imminent danger, Warren sent to General Meade for a division.

Before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, General Warren testified that he went to Little Round Top "by General Meade's direction." In a letter dated July 13th, 1872, General Warren says:

GENERAL WARREN'S LETTER.

Just before the action began in earnest, on July 2nd, I was with General Meade, near General Sickles, whose troops seemed very badly disposed on that part of the field. At my suggestion, General Meade sent me to the left to examine the condition of affairs, and I continued on till I reached Little Round Top. There were no troops on it, and it was used as a signal station. I saw that this was the key of the whole position, and that our troops in the woods in front of it could not see the ground in front of them, so that the enemy would come upon them before they would be aware of it. The long line of woods on the west side of the Emmitsburg road (which road was along a ridge) furnished an excellent place for the enemy to form out of sight, so I requested the captain of a rifle battery just in front of Little Round Top to fire a shot into these woods. He did so, and as the shot went whistling through the air the sound of it reached the enemy's troops and caused every one to look in the direction of it. This motion revealed to me the glistening of gun-barrels and bayonets of the enemy's line of battle, already formed and far outflanking the position of any of our troops; so that the line of his advance from his right to Little Round Top was unopposed. I have been particular in telling this, as the discovery was intensely thrilling to my feelings, and almost appalling. I immediately sent a hastily written dispatch to General Meade to send a division at least to me, and General Meade directed the Fifth Army Corps to take position there. The battle was already beginning to rage at the Peach Orchard, and before a single man reached Round Top the whole line of the enemy moved on us in splendid array, shouting in the most confident tones. While I was still all alone with the signal officer, the musket balls began to fly around us, and he was about to fold up his flags and withdraw, but remained, at my request, and kept waving them in defiance. Seeing troops going out on the Peach Orchard road, I rode down the hill, and fortunately met my old brigade. General Weed, commanding it, had already passed the point, and I took the responsibility to detach Colonel O'Rorke, the head of whose regiment I struck, who, on hearing my few words

of explanation about the position, moved at once to the hill-top. About this time First Lieutenant Charles E. Hazlett, of the Fifth Artillery, with his battery of rifled cannon, arrived. He comprehended the situation instantly and planted a gun on the summit of the hill. He spoke to the effect that though he could do little execution on the enemy with his guns, he could aid in giving confidence to the infantry, and that his battery was of no consequence whatever compared with holding the position. He stayed there till he was killed. I was wounded with a musket-ball while talking with Lieutenant Hazlett on the hill, but not seriously; and seeing the position saved while the whole line to the right and front of us was yielding and melting away under the enemy's fire and advance, I left the hill to rejoin General Meade near the center of the field where a new crisis was at hand."

ADDRESS OF CAPTAIN PORTER FARLEY.

140TH REGIMENT, NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS, AT DEDICATION OF REGIMENTAL MONUMENT AT GETTYSBURG,

SEPTEMBER 17, 1889.

"New York at Gettysburg," Vol. III, page 953.

EXTRACT.

* * * "It was while waiting there that a printed order was brought to Colonel O'Rorke. He read it and then handed it to the adjutant, as they both sat mounted in front of the regiment, and told him to read it aloud. It was from the general in command of the army and was as follows:

CIRCULAR.

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

June 30, 1863.

"The Commanding General requests that previous to the engagement soon expected with the enemy, corps and all other commanding officers will address their troops, explaining to them briefly the immense issues involved in this

struggle. The enemy are on our soil. The whole country now looks anxiously to this army to deliver it from the presence of the foe. Our failure to do so will leave us no such welcome as the swelling of millions of hearts with pride and joy at our success would give to every soldier in the army. Homes, firesides and domestic altars are involved. The army has fought well heretofore. It is believed that it will fight more desperately and bravely than ever if it is addressed in fitting terms.

"Corps and other commanders are authorized to order the instant death of any soldier who fails in his duty at this hour.

"By command of Major General Meade,

"S. Williams, Asst. Adjt. General."

The order was explicit that all commanding officers should address their troops; and, though doubtless much against his inclinations, as it was certainly contrary to his habit, O'Rorke, for the first and last time, there addressed a speech to his regiment. How well we all remember him sitting there on his horse in front of the regimental colors. His face, his form, his dress, all come up before us. His cheeks flushed as he spoke, but there was no hesitancy, and he closed with the ringing words: "I call on the file closers to do their duty, and if there is a man this day base enough to leave his company, let him die in his tracks. Shoot him down like a dog." The words were those of a man who intended to do his duty and who was equally determined that every man under him should do his. The speech was effective for its purpose, and a murmur of approval ran through the ranks. The scene, the action, and the words were of intense dramatic interest.

We soon changed our position, and during the greater part of the remainder of that day we lay with the whole of our corps upon Powers Hill, about a mile eastward from the spot where we now stand. Throughout the day, the boom of an occasional cannon shot could be heard, but it seemed far away. Late in the afternoon, however, we could hear the artillery in lively play to our westward, but it still seemed much more distant than it really was. The

battle of the day had actually opened, and we were soon set in motion towards the high ground which we could see to the westward, and which in fact was the very hill on which we now stand.

The First Division of our corps had preceded us, and so had the other brigades of our division and the other regiments of our brigade. It is my belief that we were marching that afternoon as the rear regiment of the Second Division. The whole of our division, therefore, was passing along the road which crosses this ridge at the foot of the northern extremity of Little Round Top; the two leading brigades had become engaged in the furious battle then raging on the further side; our own brigade was crossing the ridge, and we ourselves had about reached the point where the railroad now crosses the roadway, when an incident occurred which changed our line of march, and which proved to be an important factor in the result of that day's battle.

Just at that moment our former brigadier, Gen. G. K. Warren, Chief Engineer of the Army, with an orderly and one or two officers, rode down towards the head of our regiment. He came from the direction of the hill top, that is, from this point where we now stand. His speed and manner indicated unusual excitement. Before he reached us he called out to O'Rorke to lead his regiment that way up the hill. O'Rorke answered him that General Weed had gone ahead and expected this regiment to follow him. "Never mind that," answered Warren, "I'll take the responsibility." Warren's words and manner carried conviction of the importance of the thing he asked. Accepting his assurance of full justification, O'Rorke turned the head of the regiment to the left, and following one of the officers who had been with Warren, led it diagonally up the eastern slope of Little Round Top. Warren rode off, evidently bent on securing other troops. The staff officer who rode with us, by his impatient gestures urged us to our greatest speed. You will remember how some of the guns of Hazlett's Battery broke through our files before we reached the top, and the frantic efforts of the horses, lashed by the drivers, to pull their heavy pieces up that steep acclivity. A few seconds later the head of our regiment reached the

summit of the ridge; war's wild panorama spread before us, and we found ourselves upon the verge of battle.

It was a moment which called for leadership, and we are here today the witnesses of the manner in which that leadership was fulfilled. There was no time for tactical formations. Delay was ruin. Hesitation was destruction. Well was it for the cause he served that the man who led our regiment that day was one prompt to decide and brave to execute.

The bullets flew in among the men the moment the leading company mounted the ridge, and as not a musket was loaded the natural impulse was to halt and load them. But O'Rorke permitted no such delay. Springing from his horse, he threw his reins to the sergeant major; his sword flashed from its scabbard into the sunlight, and calling: "This way, boys," he led the charge over the rocks, down this hillside, till he came abreast the men of Vincent's Brigade, who were posted in the ravine to the left. Joining them an irregular line was formed, such as the confusion of the rocks lying thereabout permitted, and the line grew and was extended towards the right as the successive rearward companies came upon the scene of action. There while some were partly sheltered by the rocks and others stood in the open, a fierce fight went on with an enemy among the trees and underbrush. Flushed with the excitement and bravely led, they pushed up close to our line. The steadfastness and valor displayed on both sides made the result for some minutes doubtful, but a struggle so desperate and bloody could not be a long one. The enemy fell back; a short lull was succeeded by another onslaught, which was again repelled.

The story has been told in print that our colonel led with the regimental colors in his own hands; and that the men followed him and with clubbed muskets beat back the enemy. Such fictions provoke a smile, and are mentioned only to contradict them. O'Rorke carried only his sword, and you carried your muskets grasped by the butts and not by the barrels. History should record the truth without exaggeration. And this is the truth of the matter; that as the regiment came over the ridge its muskets were empty, and its leading companies rushed down the hill to meet the

enemy without firing a shot. It was only when you came abreast the men of Vincent's Brigade near the foot of the hill that you had time to load and return the fire which spit a deadly fusillade from the woods before you. Those woods seemed to swarm with the gray-coated crowd. The enemy had almost enveloped Vincent, and had nearly seized this vantage ground on which we stand. Vincent's men, who for some minutes had maintained the fight, were outnumbered and outflanked. Reinforcement was never more opportune. The arrival of the One hundred and fortieth Regiment at that crucial moment saved Little Round Top, and a glance at the surrounding topography carries conviction as to the supreme value of its possession.

While our regiment fought in the valley, the guns of Hazlett's battery thundered from this hilltop, and its discharges swept the hostile lines which had forced back Sickles' corps; so that by the time our regiments' fighting was over, not a battalion of the enemy remained in sight upon the opposite ridge, which had been the scene of that afternoon's chief battle. Such, briefly told, was the struggle for the possession of this hilltop.

When that struggle was over, the exultation of victory was soon chilled by the dejection which oppressed us as we counted and realized the cost of all that had been won. Of our regiment, 85 enlisted men and 6 officers had been wounded. Two of these officers, Lieuts. Hugh McGraw and Charles P. Klein, were fatally hurt. Besides these, 26 of the comrades who had marched with us that afternoon, had fallen dead before the fire of the enemy. Grouped by companies, a row of inanimate forms lay side by side beneath the trees upon this eastern slope. No funeral ceremony, and only shallow graves could be accorded them. In the darkness of the night, silently and with bitter dejection, each Company buried its dead.

Among the slain was one whose loss lay heavy on the heart of every one of us. Your thoughts anticipate his name. The artist's hand has reproduced his features, and his effigy upon this cenotaph now calmly gazes upon us, and for years to come shall remain the testimony to all who come this way, of the admiration and the love which this regiment accorded him. O'Rorke was among the dead.

Shot through the neck, he had fallen without a groan, and we may hope without a pang. The supreme effort of his life was consummated by a death heroic in its surroundings and undisturbed by pain.

The spot on which he died is a most fitting place, and this circle of his comrades the most fitting presence in which to utter that tribute to his memory, which by grace of character, by natural talent, and by studious culture, he so truly deserves. To me he was as an elder brother beloved; and though since that time Death has struck near and hard upon my heart, he had never before struck so near as that July afternoon, when I looked down upon the placid features of O'Rorke's dead face and felt that he had gone from me forever. Twenty-six years have passed, and time has tempered the grief which his death brought into our hearts; but we shall always cherish his memory with a loving regard and admiration, which only a noble nature could inspire. We have known many men since the day he died. Let each of us recall the list of those whose qualities have most attracted his regard. Has there been one among them who possessed combined, the grace of form and carriage, the modesty, the purity and honesty of character, the amiable temper, the intellectual force, the commanding influence over others, the knightly accomplishments of his profession, and above all, the proved courage of Col. Pat O'Rorke, who here died at the head of his regiment? For myself I must say that I have never known one whose personality was so symmetrically developed, one so free from blemish, one who so well exemplified the ideal soldier and man.

"He was a very perfect, gentle knight." This cenotaph is a memorial of all our comrades who died in this great battle; but by the united wish of all of us who survived, it bears the face and name of the man whom we all most delighted to honor. * * *"

REPORT OF GEN. GEORGE SYKES,

COMMANDING FIFTH ARMY CORPS,

DATED JULY 31, 1863.

"Rebellion Records," Series 1, Vol. *27*, page 592.

EXTRACTS.

* * * A rocky ridge, commanding almost an entire view of the plateau held by our army, was on our extreme left. Between it and the position occupied by Birney's division, Third Corps, was a narrow gorge filled with immense bowlders and flanked on either side by dense woods. It afforded excellent cover and an excellent approach for the enemy, both of which he promptly made use of. The rocky ridge commanded and controlled this gorge. In examining it and the ground adjacent, previous to posting my troops, I found a battery at its outer edge, and without adequate support. I galloped to General Birney, whose troops were nearest, explained to him the necessity of protecting the guns, and suggested that he should close his division on the battery, and hold the edge of woods on its right. I promised to fill the gap he opened, which I did with Sweitzer's and Tilton's brigades, of my First Division, *posting them myself*.

In the meantime, Vincent's brigade, of this division, had seized the rocky height, closely followed by Weed's brigade, Second Division. These troops were posted under the direction of General Warren, Chief Engineer of this army. After closing the interval made by Birney with the brigades of General Barnes, I rode rapidly to the Taneytown pike to bring up the remaining troops of the corps, and on my return with them found the greater part of Weed's brigade moving away from the height where it had been stationed, and where its presence was vital. I dispatched a staff officer to know of the General why he had vacated the ground assigned him. His reply was, "By order of General Sickles." I at once directed him to re-occupy it, which was done at the double-quick step. Hardly had he reached it before the enemy came on in tremendous force. Vincent's brigade and O'Rorke's regiment (Weed's brigade) were and had been sorely pressed. Both these heroic com-

manders had fallen; but Weed again in position, Hazlett working his guns superbly, and the timely arrival of Ayres' brigades of regulars, who were at once ordered to attack, stemmed the tide, and rolled away the foe in our front. * * *

Night closed the fight. The key of the battle-field was in our possession intact. Vincent, Weed and Hazlett, chiefs lamented throughout the corps and army, sealed with their lives the spot intrusted to their keeping, and on which so much depended. * * *

REPORT OF GEN. JAMES BARNES.

COMMANDING FIRST DIVISION, FIFTH ARMY CORPS,
BEVERLY FORD, VA., AUGUST 24, 1863.

"Rebellion Records," Series 1, Vol. 27, page 599.

EXTRACT.

I have the honor to submit the following report of the operations of the First Division of the Fifth Corps, from June 28 to July 9, including the battle of Gettysburg and the movements of the command during the few days previous and subsequent thereto *in conformity with instructions from headquarters:* * * *

Between 4 and 5 o'clock in the afternoon, orders were received from General Sykes to move toward the left and to the front. The column was immediately formed, and moved rapidly up by the Taneytown road to the ground assigned to the division. *General Sykes and myself, preceding the advance of the column* upon the ground upon which it was to take position, reconnoitered the field, and the position to be held by the command was determined upon by him.

Soon after, the head of the column entered upon the field. At the same time General Warren, of the staff of General Meade, came up, riding rapidly from the left, and, pointing out the position of the elevation known as the Round Top, not far off and toward the left, urged the importance of assistance in that direction. *General Sykes yielded* to his urgent request, and *I immediately directed*

Colonel Vincent, commanding the Third Brigade, to proceed to that point with his brigade. Colonel Vincent moved with great promptness to the post assigned to him. The brigade consisted of the Sixteenth Michigan, the Forty-fourth New York, the Eighty-third Pennsylvania, and the Twentieth Maine Regiments.

The Second Brigade, commanded by Colonel Sweitzer, arrived next upon the ground. This brigade consisted of the Fourth Michigan, the Sixty-second Pennsylvania, the Ninth Massachusetts and the Thirty-second Massachusetts. The Ninth Massachusetts, however, was absent, being upon the special duty for which it had been detailed in the morning. Upon receiving his instructions, Colonel Sweitzer placed his command promptly in position.

The First Brigade, under command of Colonel Tilton, arrived next. This brigade was composed of the Eighteenth Massachusetts, the Twenty-second Massachusetts, the One hundred and eighteenth Pennsylvania, and the First Michigan Regiments. The position assigned to it was on the right of the ground occupied by the Second Brigade, and was immediately placed by Colonel Tilton, in conformity with the instructions given to him. The division thus in position constituted the right of the Fifth Corps, and its place in line was on the left of the ground assigned to the Third Corps. The line was on the edge of a thick wood, the ground to the front being cleared of timber, but interspersed with rocks and some straggling trees. As the two brigades entered the wood, they passed over a line of troops, understood to be a portion of a brigade of the Third Corps; they were lying down upon the ground.

Upon the right of our position an open space, apparently unprotected, extended to some distance. Upon calling the attention of General Sykes to it, he remarked, referring to the part of the Third Corps over which we had passed, and then lying down in our rear, that those troops were to be removed. The remaining portion of the Third Corps was understood to be at some distance to the right, and much in advance of what seemed to be their natural and true position. This unguarded space was watched with great anxiety. There was little time, however, for deliberation. General Sykes, called by his duty to the left of the line,

went toward that portion of his command. The attack of the enemy commenced almost immediately along my front. It was very severe, but was gallantly withstood.

After some time, during which the firing was very heavy, the enemy showed himself in great force on our right flank. He had penetrated through the unguarded space there, and commenced pouring in a destructive fire from the advantageous position he had gained, and without changing my front there were no means of checking his advance toward my rear. Colonel Tilton, commanding the First Brigade, which was on the right, was immediately directed to change his front to the right, and the order was at once executed, deliberately, yet promptly, and in good order. Colonel Sweitzer, commanding the Second Brigade, on the left of the First, was immediately notified of the change upon his right, and directed to fall back in good order, and to take up a new position a short distance in his rear, for the purpose of co-operating in opposing this heavy attack upon the flank. This brigade, consisting at that time of only three regiments, numbering in all, officers and men, 1,010, was placed promptly and in good order as directed. The First Brigade numbered in all, officers and men, 654.

Affairs being in this position, General Caldwell, commanding a brigade of the Second Corps, came up in great haste, and stated to me that his brigade, then in the woods a short distance to the left, was driving the enemy in his front, and urgently requested assistance. I immediately directed Colonel Sweitzer to go to his relief. He moved his brigade forward in line, to the front and left, his men giving cheers as they advanced across an open field to the edge of the wood; but the progress of the enemy upon our flank still continued, and this brigade was compelled again to change its front to repel his advance, and soon found itself in close conflict with him. The Fourth Michigan and Sixty-second Pennsylvania were in actual contact with him. Colonel Jeffords, commanding the Fourth Michigan, was thrust through with a bayonet while gallantly attempting to rescue his colors from the grasp of the enemy.

Finding himself unable to compete with numbers far superior to his own, and that the enemy was gaining ground in the rear, Colonel Sweitzer directed his command to re-

tire slowly, but orderly, halting and firing as they retired, and took position on elevated ground a short distance to his rear and succeeded in preventing the enemy from making any further progress in that direction.

In the meantime the movements of the First Brigade, under similar circumstances, corresponded with those of the Second. This brigade, small in numbers, fired and retired in good order, and succeeded in reaching the ground on the opposite side of the open field toward the left, and there halted. The darkness put an end to the conflict, and the enemy was foiled in his effort to get in the rear of the command. The Ninth Massachusetts shortly afterward rejoined the Second Brigade, having been relieved from the duty upon which it had been detailed early in the morning. In this position the two brigades remained during the night.

On the following day, the First Brigade was directed to relieve the Third Brigade at Little Round Top, where it also had succeeded in maintaining the position assigned to it, as will appear in the sequel.

I cannot speak in terms too commendatory of the bearing of the officers and men of these two brigades during the progress of this conflict. Skillfully directed by the two brigade commanders, they obeyed with cool intrepidity every order issued to them, under the most trying circumstances, and long resisted superior numbers with firmness. Partly surrounded by the enemy, they succeeded in preventing the left of the line from being taken in reverse, resisting an attack not exceeded, I am sure, in violence in any contest hitherto occurring. The exposure of their flank, arising from whatever cause, placed them in a most dangerous position and their heroic conduct alone saved the command at least, if not the entire left of the army, from disaster. The statement of the casualties of the contest is sufficient evidence of their gallant resistance, and it is alike due to those who have survived and to the memory of the gallant dead that this record should be made of their valor and devotion.

The Third Brigade, as above related, was detached from the division upon its arrival upon the ground, and was consequently removed from my immediate oversight. The record of its service, however, drawn principally from the

report of its commander, belongs to this record of the service of the division.

Colonel Vincent, commanding the brigade, upon being detached, as above mentioned, proceeded promptly to the position assigned to him. It was upon an elevated and rocky hill known as Little Round Top. It was situated at some distance to our left, and near the extreme left of the line of battle. Its defense was of the utmost importance. When the brigade was placed in position, the Twentieth Maine occupied the left of the line, the Sixteenth Michigan the right, the Eighty-third Pennsylvania and the Forty-fourth New York the center. *The Third Division of the Fifth Corps was posted on the right of the brigade.* The enemy had concentrated a heavy force in front of the line, and began a fierce attack immediately after the troops were in position. Repeated charges were made upon the center of the brigade, but the line was unbroken. A vigorous attack upon the right caused a temporary wavering there, but the One hundred and fortieth New York coming promptly to its support, it was re-established at once.

It was at this time that Colonel Vincent, commanding the brigade, while rallying this part of his command, fell, mortally wounded. He was a gallant officer, beloved and respected by his command and by all who knew him. His death is a serious loss to the army and the country.

Upon the removal of Colonel Vincent from the field, the command of the brigade devolved upon Colonel Rice, of the Forty-fourth New York Volunteers. The enemy, as stated, having in vain attempted to break the right of the brigade, renewed his attack upon the center and left. The Twentieth Maine, Colonel Chamberlain commanding, was posted on the left. It consisted of 380 men and officers. While the enemy in front was making a fierce attack, a brigade was observed in the rear of their lines moving by its right flank and passing through a slight ravine on our left, with the evident purpose of gaining a position on the left flank of this regiment.

Colonel Chamberlain at once threw back his left wing, and extended his right wing by intervals toward the left, in order to avoid diminishing the extent of his front. The brigade of the enemy alluded to reaching a proper position,

attacked him furiously on the left flank, advancing within 10 paces and rapidly firing. They were first checked and then repulsed by the left wing of the regiment, thrown back for that purpose.

A second, third, and fourth time the enemy renewed their attempt to break this line, and each time were they successfully repelled by that handful of men. Four times that little interval of 10 paces was the scene of a desperate conflict. The ground was strewed with dead and wounded men of both sides, promiscuously mingled. Their ammunition was exhausted; they replenished it from the cartridge boxes of the men lying around them, whether friends or foes, but even this resource soon failed them; the enemy in greatly superior numbers pressed hard; men and officers began to look to the rear for safety, but the gallant commander of the regiment ordered the bayonets to be fixed, and, at the command "Forward" that wearied and worn body of men rushed onward with a shout. The enemy fell back. Pressing on, and wheeling to the right in open intervals, the left wing came again in line with the right wing, and then the whole regiment, deployed at intervals of 5 paces, followed up the advantage they had gained. The enemy threw down their arms and surrendered in large numbers; the others fled rapidly from the contest; 368 prisoners, including 1 colonel, 1 lieutenant colonel, and a dozen other officers of lesser rank were sent to the rear; 50 of their dead lay upon the field, and large numbers of their wounded; 30 of this gallant regiment were killed, over 100 were wounded, but not one was taken a prisoner, and none were missing.

It was now nearly dark. A portion of the enemy appeared to have occupied the summit of the rocky hill to the left. The men of this brave regiment, exhausted by their labors, had thrown themselves upon the ground, and many of them sunk at once in sleep. Colonel Rice, now in command of the brigade, directed Colonel Chamberlain to drive the enemy from this height. The order was at once given. Roused again to action, and advancing with fixed bayonets and without firing, lest the smallness of their numbers might be suspected, they rushed up the hill.

Twenty-five more prisoners, including some staff officers, were added to the number previously taken, with a loss to the regiment of 1 officer mortally wounded and 1 man taken prisoner by the enemy. It was ascertained that these troops occupying the hill had been sent from Hood's division, which was then massed a few hundred yards distant, and that their object was to reconnoiter the position as a preliminary to taking possession of the height.

In addition to the prisoners above mentioned as taken by this regiment, 300 stand of arms were also captured by them. It is due to this regiment and to its commander that their service should be thus recorded in some detail.

Upon receiving a re-enforcement of five regiments of the Third Division, under command of Colonel Fisher, Colonel Rice detached two of them to the aid of Colonel Chamberlain, in order to maintain the position he had gained, and he was thus enabled to hold it, and the enemy, having been repelled upon every point of his attack, and night coming on, withdrew from the conflict.

Colonel Rice directed the Forty-fourth New York and the Eighty-third Pennsylvania to move to the front and gather up the wounded, who, including those of the enemy who had been left upon the field, were carefully brought in. The total results of the service of this brigade are stated by Colonel Rice to be 500 prisoners captured, including 2 colonels and 15 other commissioned officers, and 1,000 stand of arms. The brigade numbered about 1,000 men. * * *

A tribute is due to the memory of Colonel Vincent, who fell, mortally wounded, early in the engagement. He lingered a few days after the engagement. His promotion as a brigadier-general was sent to him at once as an appreciation of his services by the Government, but it reached him too late for his own recognition. He expired soon after its receipt. (July 7, 1863. O. W. N.) * * *

Being disabled for further actual command of the division, the opportune arrival of General Griffin enabled me to relinquish it to him, and the division moved toward Middletown, where it arrived on July 8. * * *

REPORT OF COL. WILLIAM S. TILTON,

COMMANDING FIRST BRIGADE, FIRST DIV., FIFTH A. C.

Middletown, Md., July 9, 1863.

"Rebellion Records," Series 1, Vol. 27, page 607.

EXTRACT.

* * * At 4:30 p. m., on July 2, the brigade, under my command, advanced to the front, and was placed, by order of General Barnes, in order of battle in a piece of woods at the south of Mr. Rose's house. The Second Brigade was on our left, but there being no infantry upon our right, I made a crotchet by refusing the right wing of my right battalion (One Hundred and Eighteenth Pennsylvania Volunteers, Colonel Gwyn). * * *

No sooner was the line formed than the foe attacked our front. The onslaught was terrible and my losses heavy, so much so that I was somewhat doubtful if our line could withstand it. This fact I communicated to *the general commanding division, who ordered me to fall back in good order if unable to hold the position;* but my men behaved nobly, and twice repulsed the assailants. My colonels wished to advance. Being anxious about my right, however, I reconnoitred in person, and discovered the enemy in large force coming from the direction of Rose's house, with the evident design of outflanking me. I immediately retired and took up a new position (in two lines), at the left and rear of a battery which had been posted about 300 yards to my right and rear. The battery soon commenced to retreat, firing, followed by the rebels, who were now again upon my right flank. To avoid this flank movement, I retired, firing, a short distance in the timber, and then moved across an open field, took up a new position upon the right of the Second Division, *and reported to General Sykes.*

* * * On the 3rd we relieved the Third Brigade, on duty, holding the rocky hill upon the extreme left.

On the 4th, I advanced the brigade to the edge of the woods in our front and sent out a strong line of skirmishers to feel the enemy. *The report of this reconnoissance has been made by order directly to Major-General Sykes.*

REPORT OF COL. JACOB B. SWEITZER,

COMMANDING SECOND BRIGADE, FIRST DIV., FIFTH A. C.

July 31, 1863.

"Rebellion Records," Series 1, Vol. 1, page 610.

EXTRACT.

* * * When we moved off from the orchard, the Third Brigade, being on the left of the division, moved first, the Second and First Brigades following in the inverted order.

The Second Brigade was placed in position in a wood fronting an open field, the woods bordering two sides of the field, the side in which we were and also that extending at right angles from our left toward the enemy, and in the last mentioned wood the First Brigade was posted, connecting with our left. Having formed the three regiments of this brigade in line of battle (the Ninth Massachusetts being still absent on picket duty) in their regular order from right to left, and finding this formation threw the Thirty-second Massachusetts, which was on our left, into an exposed position beyond the woods in low, cleared ground, I directed Colonel Prescott to change his front to the rear, so as to give him the benefit of the elevated ground and the cover of the woods, which movement he executed.

We had not remained long in this position before an attack commenced by the enemy in front of the First Brigade and Thirty-second Massachusetts. As there was no appearance of the enemy in front of the line formed by the Sixty-second Pennsylvania and Fourth Michigan, I directed them to change front to the left, and form lines in rear of the Thirty-second Massachusetts, to strengthen that position. During the execution of this order, the attack continued; the firing was very severe, and we lost many brave officers and men. Here fell Major Lowry, second to none in all the attributes of a soldier and a gentleman.

When the attack commenced, word was sent by General Barnes that when we retired we should fall back under cover of the woods. This order was communicated to Colonel Prescott, whose regiment was then under the hot-

test fire. Understanding it to be a peremptory order to retire then, he replied, "I don't want to retire; I am not ready to retire; I can hold this place," and he made good his assertion. Being informed that he misunderstood the order, which was only intended to inform him how to retire when it became necessary, he was satisfied, and he and his command held their ground manfully.

Some time after that, word was sent that the First Brigade was retiring, and *General Barnes sent me word to fall back also,* which I did in perfect good order, the regiments retaining their alignments and halting and firing as they came back. Having arrived at the road leading along the rear of the wheat-field, the brigade was formed in line in the woods in the rear of the road and parallel to it, the right resting on the corner of the woods toward the front. We had not remained here more than, say, fifteen minutes, when a general officer I had never seen before rode up to me, and said his command was driving the enemy in the woods in front of the wheat-field; that he needed the support of a brigade, and desired to know if I would give him mine. I referred him to General Barnes, and said I would obey his directions with pleasure. He spoke to the general, who was not far off. General Barnes came and stated to me what had been said to him by General Caldwell (this I learned was the officer who had lately spoken to me), *and asked me if I would take the brigade in.* I told him I would if he wished me to do so. He said he did. The command was then called to attention. General Barnes got out in front of them, and made a few patriotic remarks, to which they responded with a cheer, and we started off across the wheat-field in a line parallel to the road, our right flank resting on the woods. We advanced to the stone fence beyond the wheat-field next to the woods, and took position behind it to support, as we supposed, our friends in the woods in front. The Fourth Michigan, being on the right of the brigade, extended beyond the stone fence, and was, consequently, most exposed.

We had scarcely got to this position before I noticed regiments retiring from the woods on our right, which I supposed were relieved by others who had taken their places, and would protect us in that direction. I observed

also that there was considerable firing diagonally toward our rear from these woods, which I then thought were shots from our troops aimed over us at the enemy in the woods beyond and falling short. They were, however, much too frequent to be pleasant, and my color bearer, Ed. Martin, remarked, "Colonel, I'll be ——— if I don't think we are faced the wrong way; the rebs are up there in the woods behind us, on the right."

About this time, too, word was brought me from the Fourth Michigan and Sixty-second Pennsylvania that the enemy were getting into our rear in the woods on the right. I directed those regiments to change front, to face in that direction and meet them, which they did, the firing in the meanwhile being rapid and severe. I at the same time dispatched Lieutenant Seitz, aide-de-camp, to communicate to General Barnes our situation. He reached the point where he had last seen General Barnes. *He was not there.* Lieutenant Seitz found the enemy had reached that point, and he came near falling into their hands himself; his horse was killed, and he made his way back to me on foot; *reported that General Barnes was not to be found;* that the enemy was in the woods on our right as far back as where we had started from, and along the road in rear of the wheat-field.

Finding that we were surrounded—that our enemy was under cover, while we were in the open field exposed to their fire—I directed the command to fall back. This was done in order, the command halting and firing as it retired. The Fourth Michigan and Sixty-second Pennsylvania had become mixed up with the enemy, and many hand-to-hand conflicts occurred. * * *

Finding, as we retired in the direction from which we advanced, that the fire of the enemy grew more severe on our right, I took a diagonal direction toward the corner of the wheat-field on our left and rear. We crossed the stone fence on this side of the field, and retired to the rear of the battery on the elevation beyond, where the command halted.

We had lost heavily in our passage across the field. The Fourth Michigan and Sixty-second Pennsylvania had been surrounded, and a large proportion of those regiments

were missing, either killed, wounded, or prisoners. What remained of the command formed in the rear of the battery, and we were shortly afterward joined by the Ninth Massachusetts, which had been absent all day on detached duty.

It is difficult to conceive of a more trying situation than that in which three regiments of this command had lately found themsleves, and from which they had just effected their escape; in fact, I have since understood that one of General Barnes' aids remarked to him shortly after we had advanced, when it was discovered the enemy was behind us on the flank, that he might bid good-bye to the Second Brigade. I was also informed by General Barnes that, learning soon after we had advanced, the situation on our right, he had dispatched an orderly to me with the information and a verbal order to withdraw, but the orderly never reached me.

Every officer and man in the command, so far as I am informed, did his whole duty. All stood their ground and fought unflinchingly until they were ordered by me to retire, and in falling back behaved with coolness and deliberation. We lost many of our best officers and men.

I subjoin a field report of the regiments engaged on the morning of July 2, and also a report of the same regiments on July 4. A nominal and tabular report of casualties in the command has already been forwarded.

About dark on the evening of the 2nd, the acting assistant adjutant-general of the First Brigade came to me and inquired for General Barnes; said he was directed by General Sykes to tell him to have the Second Brigade form on the right of the First in the position they then were. As General Barnes was not present, I receiveed the order, and put the Second Brigade in the position indicated, where we remained until the evening of the 5th, when the division advanced toward Emmitsburg.

REPORT OF COLONEL JAMES C. RICE,

COMMANDING THIRD BRIGADE, FIRST DIV., FIFTH A. C.

AT BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG, WITH
REPORTS OF REGIMENTAL COMMANDERS.

"Rebellion Records," Series 1, Vol. *27*, page 616.

July 31, 1863.

In compliance with orders from division headquarters, I have the honor to report the operations of this brigade during the battle near Gettysburg on the 2nd and 3rd inst.

The brigade, under the command of the late Colonel Vincent, was detached from the division and ordered into position at about 4 p. m. of the 2nd instant, on the extreme left of our line of battle. The Twentieth Maine occupied the extreme left of the brigade line, the Sixteenth Michigan the extreme right, connecting with the Third Division, under General Crawford, while the Eighty-third Pennsylvania and Forty-fourth New York occupied the center. The muskets taken into action by the brigade numbered about 1,000.

The ground occupied by the brigade in line of battle was nearly that of a quarter circle, composed mostly of high rocks and cliffs in the center and becoming more wooded and less rugged as you approached to the left. The right was thrown forward somewhat to the front of the ledge of rocks, and was much more exposed than other parts of the line. A comparatively smooth ravine extended along the entire front, perhaps 50 yards from our line, while on the left and beyond a high and jagged mountain rises, called Round Top hill. That the disposition of the forces and the nature of the ground may be better understood by the general commanding, I send with this report a diagram of the same.

The brigade had scarcely formed in line of battle and pushed forward its skirmishers when a division of the enemy's forces, under General Hood, made a desperate attack along the entire line of the brigade. He approached in three columns, with no skirmishers in advance. The object of the enemy was evident. If he could gain the vantage ground occupied by this brigade, the left flank of

our line must give way, opening to him a vast field for successful operations in the rear of our entire army.

To effect this object the enemy made every effort. Massing two or three brigades of his force, he tried for an hour in vain to break the lines of the Forty-fourth New York and Eighty-third Pennsylvania, charging again and again within a few yards of these unflinching troops. At every charge he was repulsed with terrible slaughter. Despairing of success at this point, he made a desperate attack upon the extreme right of the brigade, forcing back a part of the Sixteenth Michigan. This regiment was broken, and, through some misunderstanding of orders, explained in the official report of the commanding officer, it was thrown into confusion; but being immediately supported by the One Hundred and Fortieth New York Volunteers, the line became again firm and unbroken.

It was at this point of time that Colonel Vincent, commanding the brigade, fell mortally wounded. Of the character of this gallant and accomplished officer I will speak before I close this report.

The enemy again attacked the center with great vigor, and the extreme left with desperation. Passing one brigade of his forces by the right flank in three columns, he pushed through the ravine toward the left of our brigade, came immediately to a "front," and charged upon the Twentieth Maine. Now occurred the most critical time of the action. For above half an hour the struggle was desperate. At length the enemy pressed so strongly upon the left flank of Colonel Chamberlain's regiment that he wisely determined to change the order of battle, and commanded his left wing to fall back at right angles to his right. He then ordered a charge and repulsed the enemy at every point.

On assuming the command of the brigade during this attack upon the center and left, I at once passed along the line, and notified the officers and men of my own regiment that I was about to take command of the brigade and that they must hold their position to the last. I did this that no panic might arise. I then notified all the commanders of the regiments in person, and assured them of my determination to hold the line to the last. Colonel Chamberlain and other officers immediately informed me that their commands

were out of ammunition. I had at this time neither an aide nor an orderly even to bear a message. (See P. S.) The enemy was still pressing heavily upon the line. I immediately pressed into service every officer and man in the rear not engaged in the action, whether known or unknown, and made them pledge their honor that they would deliver in person every order that I should send by them. I sent four of them, one after another, with orders for ammunition. The ammunition came promptly, was distributed at once, and the fight went on.

The enemy was now attempting to take possession of Round Top hill, a commanding position overlooking our left. It was evident no time was to be lost, and I sent at once other officers, whom I pressed into my service, with messages to the general commanding the corps, asking for re-enforcements to support the brigade. The messages were promptly delivered, and five regiments were at once sent to my support from the Third Division, General Crawford, under command of Colonel Fisher.

Having, with the aid of this officer, properly disposed of three regiments of this force, I ordered Colonel Chamberlain, of the Twentieth Maine, to advance and take possession of the mountain. This order was promptly and gallantly executed by this brave and accomplished officer, who rapidly drove the enemy over the mountain, capturing many prisoners. Colonel Fisher at once ordered two regiments of his command to support Colonel Chamberlain, and the hill remained permanently in our possession.

The forces of the enemy being now repulsed on our left and front, I ordered a detachment from the Forty-fourth New York Volunteers and the Eighty-third Pennsylvania to push forward and secure all the fruits of this hard-earned victory.

It was now 8 o'clock in the evening, and before 9 o'clock we had entire possession of the enemy's ground, had gathered up and brought in all of our own wounded and those of the enemy, and had taken and sent to the rear over 500 prisoners, including 2 colonels and 15 commissioned officers, together with over 1,000 stand of arms belonging to the enemy.

The following morning the prisoners of the brigade buried all of our own dead and a large number of those of the enemy.

The fearful loss of the enemy during this struggle may be estimated from the fact that over 50 of his dead were counted in front of the Twentieth Maine Regiment, and his loss was nearly in that proportion along our entire line.

Although this brigade has been engaged in nearly all of the great battles of the Army of the Potomac, and has always greatly distinguished itself for gallant behavior, yet in none has it fought so desperately or achieved for itself such imperishable honors as in this severe conflict of the 2nd instant.

A nominal and tabular list of the casualties of this brigade has already been forwarded to the major-general commanding, but it is fitting again to mention the names of the brave and faithful officers of the command who fell in this desperate struggle. Of the Forty-fourth New York Volunteers, Capt. L. S. Larrabee and Lieutenants Dunham and Thomas; of the Twentieth Maine, Lieutenant Kendall, and of the Sixteenth Michigan, Lieutenants Browne, Jewett, and Borden were killed.

The brigade was relieved during the forenoon of the 3d instant by the First Brigade, and ordered to the center of the line, where it remained in reserve the balance of the day, exposed to a severe cannonading, but with no loss, from the security of its position.

The colonel commanding would commend to the favorable notice of the general commanding the following-named officers, for their gallant conduct in battle on the 2d instant: Colonel Chamberlain and Adjutant Chamberlain, of the Twentieth Maine; Lieutenant-Colonel Conner and Major Knox, of the Forty-fourth New York Volunteers; Captain Woodward and Adjutant Gifford, of the Eighty-third Pennsylvania, and Captain Elliott and Adjutant Jacklin, of the Sixteenth Michigan.

Especially would I call the attention of the general commanding to the distinguished services rendered by Colonel Chamberlain throughout the entire struggle.

To the loss sustained by this command in the death of Colonel Vincent I can refer in no more appropriate lan-

guage than that used in the general order announcing it to this brigade, a copy of which I herewith annex.

P. S. In justice to the officers composing the staff, it gives me satisfaction to state, in explanation of my report, that at the time I took command, Captain (Eugene A.) Nash, inspector-general of the brigade, was, in obedience to orders received from Colonel Vincent, at the front watching the movements of the enemy, to report the same if he should attempt a flank movement; that Captain (John M.) Clark, assistant adjutant-general, in obedience to orders, was absent for ammunition, and that Captain (Amos M.) Judson, by orders, was absent for re-enforcements. During the night these officers rendered me the greatest service and I desire to commend each of them to the most favorable notice of the commanding general for their gallant conduct both under Colonel Vincent's command as well as my own.

(Inclosure.)

General Orders No. 5,
Hdqrs. 3d Brigade, 1st Div., 5th Corps,
July 12, 1863.

The colonel commanding hereby announces to the brigade the death of Brig.-Gen. Strong Vincent. He died near Gettysburg, Pa., July 7, 1863, from the effects of a wound received on the 2d instant, and within sight of that field which his bravery had so greatly assisted to win. A day hallowed with all the glory of success is thus sombered by the sorrow of our loss. Wreaths of victory give way to chaplets of mourning, hearts exultant to feelings of grief. A soldier, a scholar, a friend, has fallen. For his country, struggling for its life, he willingly gave his own. Grateful for his services, the State which proudly claims him as her own will give him an honored grave and a costly monument, but he ever will remain buried in our hearts, and our love for his memory will outlast the stone which shall bear the inscription of his bravery, his virtues, and his patriotism.

While we deplore his death, and remember with sorrow our loss, let us emulate the example of his fidelity and patriotism, feeling that he lives but in vain who lives not for his God and his country.

REPORT OF COL. JOSHUA L. CHAMBERLAIN,

TWENTIETH MAINE INFANTRY.

Field Near Emmitsburg, July 6, 1863.

In compliance with the request of the colonel commanding the brigade, I have the honor to submit a somewhat detailed report of the operations of the Twentieth Regiment Maine Volunteers in the battle of Gettysburg, on the 2d and 3rd instant.

Having acted as the advance guard, made necessary by the proximity of the enemy's cavalry, on the march of the day before, my command on reaching Hanover, Pa., just before sunset on that day, were much worn, and lost no time in getting ready for an expected bivouac. Rations were scarcely issued, and the men about preparing supper, when rumors that the enemy had been encountered that day near Gettysburg absorbed every other interest, and very soon orders came to march forthwith to Gettysburg.

My men moved out with a promptitude and spirit extraordinary, the cheers and welcome they received on the road adding to their enthusiasm. After an hour or two of sleep by the roadside just before daybreak, we reached the heights southeasterly of Gettysburg at about 7 a. m. July 2.

Massed at first with the rest of the division on the right of the road, we were moved several times farther toward the left. Although expecting every moment to be put into action and held strictly in line of battle, yet the men were able to take some rest and make the most of their rations.

Somewhere near 4 p. m. a sharp cannonade, at some distance to our left and front, was the signal for a sudden and rapid movement of our whole division in the direction of this firing, which grew warmer as we approached. Passing an open field in the hollow ground in which some of our batteries were going into position, our brigade reached the skirt of a piece of woods, in the farther edge of which there was a heavy musketry fire, and when about to go forward into line we received from Colonel Vincent, commanding the brigade, orders to move to the left at the double-quick, when we took a farm road crossing Plum Run in order to gain a rugged mountain spur called Granite Spur, or Little Round Top.

The enemy's artillery got range of our column as we were climbing the spur, and the crashing of the shells among the rocks and the tree tops made us move lively along the crest. One or two shells burst in our ranks. Passing to the southern slope of Little Round Top, Colonel Vincent indicated to me the ground my regiment was to occupy, informing me that this was the extreme left of our general line, and that a desperate attack was expected in order to turn that position, concluding by telling me I was to "hold that ground at all hazards." This was the last word I heard from him.

In order to commence by making my right firm, I formed my regiment on the right into line, giving such direction to the line as should best secure the advantage of the rough, rocky, and stragglingly wooded ground.

The line faced generally toward a more conspicuous eminence southwest of ours, which is known as Sugar Loaf, or Round Top. Between this and my position intervened a smooth and thinly wooded hollow. My line formed, I immediately detached Company B, Captain Morrill commanding, to extend from my left flank across this hollow as a line of skirmishers, with directions to act as occasion might dictate, to prevent a surprise on my exposed flank and rear.

The artillery fire on our position had meanwhile been constant and heavy, but my formation was scarcely complete when the artillery was replaced by a vigorous infantry assault upon the center of our brigade to my right, but it very soon involved the right of my regiment and gradually extended along my entire front. The action was quite sharp and at close quarters.

In the midst of this an officer from my center informed me that some important movement of the enemy was going on in his front, beyond that of the line with which we were engaged. Mounting a large rock, I was able to see a considerable body of the enemy moving by the flank in rear of their line engaged, and passing from the direction of the foot of Great Round Top through the valley toward the front of my left. The close engagement not allowing any change of front, I immediately stretched my regiment to the left, by taking intervals by the left flank, and at the same

time "refusing" my left wing, so that it was nearly at right angles with my right, thus occupying about twice the extent of our ordinary front, some of the companies being brought into single rank when the nature of the ground gave sufficient strength or shelter. My officers and men understood my wishes so well that this movement was executed under fire, the right wing keeping up fire, without giving the enemy any occasion to seize or even to suspect their advantage. But we were not a moment too soon; the enemy's flanking column having gained their desired direction, burst upon my left, where they evidently had expected an unguarded flank, with great demonstration.

We opened a brisk fire at close range, which was so sudden and effective that they soon fell back among the rocks and low trees in the valley, only to burst forth again with a shout, and rapidly advanced, firing as they came. They pushed up to within a dozen yards of us before the terrible effectiveness of our fire compelled them to break and take shelter.

They renewed the assault on our whole front, and for an hour the fighting was severe. Squads of the enemy broke through our line in several places, and the fight was literally hand to hand. The edge of the fight rolled backward and forward like a wave. The dead and wounded were now in our front and then in our rear. Forced from our position, we desperately recovered it, and pushed the enemy down to the foot of the slope. The intervals of the struggle were seized to remove our wounded (and those of the enemy also), to gather ammunition from the cartridge-boxes of disabled friend or foe on the field, and even to secure better muskets than the Enfields, which we found did not stand service well. Rude shelters were thrown up of the loose rocks that covered the ground.

Captain Woodward, commanding the Eighty-third Pennsylvania Volunteers, on my right, gallantly maintaining his fight, judiciously and with hearty co-operation made his movements conform to my necessities, so that my right was at no time exposed to a flank attack.

The enemy seemed to have gathered all their energies for their final assault. We had gotten our thin line into as good a shape as possible, when a strong force emerged from

the scrub wood in the valley, as well as I could judge, in two lines in echelon by the right, and, opening a heavy fire, the first line came on as if they meant to sweep everything before them. We opened on them as well as we could with our scanty ammunition snatched from the field.

It did not seem possible to withstand another shock like this now coming on. Our loss had been severe. One-half of my left wing had fallen and a third of my regiment lay just behind us, dead or badly wounded. At this moment my anxiety was increased by a great roar of musketry in my rear, on the farther or northerly slope of Little Round Top, apparently on the flank of the regular brigade, which was in support of Hazlett's battery on the crest behind us. The bullets from this attack struck into my left rear, and I feared that the enemy might have nearly surrounded the Little Round Top, and only a desperate chance was left for us. My ammunition was soon exhausted. My men were firing their last shot and getting ready to "club" their muskets.

It was imperative to strike before we were struck by this overwhelming force in a hand-to-hand fight, which we could not probably have withstood or survived. At that crisis, I ordered the bayonet. The word was enough. It ran like fire along the line, from man to man, and rose into a shout, with which they sprang forward upon the enemy, now not 30 yards away. The effect was surprising; many of the enemy's first line threw down their arms and surrendered. An officer fired his pistol at my head with one hand, while he handed me his sword with the other. Holding fast by our right, and swinging forward our left, we made an extended "right wheel," before which the enemy's second line broke, and fell back, fighting from tree to tree, many being captured, until we had swept the valley and cleared the front of nearly our entire brigade.

Meantime, Captain Morrill with his skirmishers (sent out from my left flank), with some dozen or fifteen of the U. S. Sharpshooters who had put themselves under his direction, fell upon the enemy as they were breaking, and by his demonstrations, as well as his well-directed fire, added much to the effect of the charge.

Having thus cleared the valley and driven the enemy up the western slope of the Great Round Top, not wishing to press so far out as to hazard the ground I was to hold by leaving it exposed to a sudden rush of the enemy, I succeeded (although with some effort to stop my men, who declared they were "on the road to Richmond") in getting the regiment into good order and resuming our original position.

Four hundred prisoners, including two field and several line officers, were sent to the rear. These were mainly from the Fifteenth and Forty-seventh Alabama Regiments, with some of the Fourth and Fifth Texas. One hundred and fifty of the enemy were found killed and wounded in our front.

At dusk, Colonel Rice informed me of the fall of Colonel Vincent, which had devolved the command of the brigade on him, and that Colonel Fisher had come up with a brigade to our support. These troops were massed in our rear. It was the understanding, as Colonel Rice informed me, that Colonel Fisher's brigade was to advance and seize the western slope of Great Round Top, where the enemy had shortly before been driven. But, after considerable delay, this intention for some reason was not carried into execution.

We were apprehensive that if the enemy were allowed to strengthen himself in that position, he would have a great advantage in renewing the attack on us at daylight or before. Colonel Rice then directed me to make the movement to seize that crest.

It was now 9 p. m. Without waiting to get ammunition, but trusting in part to the very circumstance of not exposing our movement or our small front by firing, and with bayonets fixed, the little handful of 200 men pressed up the mountain side in very extended order, as the steep and jagged surface of the ground compelled. We heard squads of the enemy falling back before us, and, when near the crest, we met a scattering and uncertain fire, which caused us the great loss of the gallant Lieutenant Linscott, who fell, mortally wounded. In the silent advance in the darkness we laid hold of 25 prisoners, among them a staff officer of General (E. M.) Law, commanding the brigade imme-

diately opposed to us during the fight. Reaching the crest, and reconnoitering the ground, I placed the men in a strong position among the rocks, and informed Colonel Rice, requesting also ammunition and some support to our right, which was very near the enemy, their movements and words even being now distinctly heard by us.

Some confusion soon after resulted from the attempt of some regiment of Colonel Fisher's brigade to come to our support. They had found a wood road up the mountain, which brought them on my right flank, and also in proximity to the enemy, massed a little below. Hearing their approach, and thinking a movement from that quarter could only be from the enemy, I made disposition to receive them as such. In the confusion which attended the attempt to form them in support of my right, the enemy opened a brisk fire, which disconcerted my efforts to form them and disheartened the supports themselves, so that I saw no more of them that night.

Feeling somewhat insecure in this isolated position, I sent in for the Eighty-third Pennsylvania, which came speedily, followed by the Forty-fourth New York, and, having seen these well posted, I sent a strong picket to the front, with instructions to report to me every half hour during the night, and allowed the rest of my men to sleep on their arms.

At some time about midnight, two regiments of Colonel Fisher's brigade came up the mountain beyond my left, and took position near the summit; but as the enemy did not threaten from that direction, I made no effort to connect with them.

We went into the fight with 386, all told—358 guns. Every pioneer and musician who could carry a musket went into the ranks. Even the sick and footsore, who could not keep up in the march, came up as soon as they could find their regiments, and took their places in line of battle, while it was battle, indeed. Some prisoners I had under guard, under sentence of court-martial, I was obliged to put into the fight, and they bore their part well, for which I shall recommend a commutation of their sentence.

The loss, so far as I can ascertain it, is 136—30 of whom were killed, and among the wounded are many mortally.

Captain Billings, Lieutenant Kendall, and Lieutenant Linscott are officers whose loss we deeply mourn, efficient soldiers and pure and high-minded men.

In such an engagement there were many incidents of heroism and noble character which should have place even in an official report; but, under present circumstances, I am unable to do justice to them. I will say of that regiment that the resolution, courage, and heroic fortitude which enabled us to withstand so formidable an attack have happily led to so conspicuous a result, that they may safely trust to history to record their merits.

About noon on the 3d of July, we were withdrawn, and formed on the right of the brigade, in the front edge of a piece of woods near the left center of our main line of battle, where we were held in readiness to support our troops, then receiving the severe attack of the afternoon of that day.

On the 4th, we made a reconnaissance to the front, to ascertain the movements of the enemy, but finding that they had retired, at least beyond Willoughby's Run, we returned to Little Round Top, where we buried our dead in the place where we had laid them during the fight, marking each grave by a head-board made of ammunition boxes, with each soldier's name cut upon it. We also buried 50 of the enemy's dead, in front of our position of July 2. We then looked after our wounded, whom I had taken the responsibility of putting into the houses of citizens in the vicinity of Little Round Top, and, on the morning of the 5th, took up our march on the Emmitsburg road.

REPORT OF LIEUT.-COL. NORVAL E. WELCH,

SIXTEENTH MICHIGAN INFANTRY.

Near Emmittsburg, Md., July 6, 1863.

In reply to circular of this date from brigade headquarters, as to the part this regiment sustained in the action of July 2 and 3, I have the honor to report:

The regiment, under my command, lay with the Third Brigade, First Division, Fifth Corps, closed in mass, near and in rear of Gettysburg, to the left of the main road, during most of the day. The brigade was commanded by

Col. Strong Vincent, Eighty-third Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers.

About 4 p. m. we moved rapidly to the extreme left of our line of battle, and went into position on the left of the brigade, at that time circling the crest of a high, rocky hill. After deploying two of my largest companies as skirmishers—Brady's Sharpshooters from the left, and Company A from the right—I was ordered at double-quick to the right of the brigade, and to take my position on the right of the Forty-fourth New York. Before this could be accomplished, however, we were under a heavy fire of the enemy's infantry. We succeeded, however, in securing our places after some loss.

We remained in this position nearly half an hour, when some one (supposed to be General Weed or Major-General Sykes) called from the extreme crest of the hill to fall back nearer the top, where a much less exposed line could be taken up. This order was not obeyed, except by single individuals. From some misconstruction of orders, and entirely unwarrantable assumption of authority, Lieutenant Kydd ordered the colors back. None left with them, however, but three of the color-guard. They followed the brigade colors to where Colonel Vincent, after being wounded, had been carried, where they remained all night, joining the regiment in the morning with 45 men, who had left the field during and after the fight. All the remainder of the regiment retained their position until relieved.

The two companies sent out as skirmishers numbered about 50. The number of muskets taken in line was about 150; the number killed and wounded 59—21 killed. Several wounded have since died.

On the 3d, we took up a new line farther to the right, at the left of the brigade, and remained on our arms for twenty-four hours.

Captain Elliott and Adjutant Jacklin behaved with their usual gallantry. Captain Partridge, Lieutenants Borgman (wounded), Woodruff, Forsyth, Cameron (wounded, with arm amputated), Swart, Graham, Salter, and Captain Chandler, behaved nobly and handled their men with coolness and valor. Lieutenants Browne, Company E, Jewett, Company K, and Borden, Company F, died, bravely defend-

ing the flag they had sworn to support and that they loved in their hearts, and emulating the bravest. I had no truer or purer officers, and their loss cannot be replaced.

REPORT OF LIEUT-COL. FREEMAN CONNER,

FORTY-FOURTH NEW YORK INFANTRY.

July 6, 1863.

I have the honor to submit the following report of the action taken by this regiment in the engagement of July 2:

About 4 p. m. our regiment, Col. J. C. Rice commanding, was placed in position on Round Top Hill, with the Eighty-third Pennsylvania on our left and the Sixteenth Michigan on our right. Company B was immediately thrown out as skirmishers. When they had advanced about 200 yards they met the enemy advancing in three lines of battle.

Orders were immediately given by Capt. L. S. Larrabee, commanding the company, to fall back upon the battalion. It was while executing this order that that faithful and brave officer was shot through the body and instantly killed, being the first officer that this regiment had ever had killed in battle.

The enemy continued to advance until the first line came within about 40 yards of our line. Upon their first appearance we opened a heavy fire upon them, which was continued until they were compelled to retreat. After they had disappeared in our immediate front, we turned our fire upon those who had advanced in the hollow to our right, and continued it until we were out of ammunition.

After we had been engaged about one hour, Colonel Vincent, commanding brigade, was wounded, and the command fell upon Col. J. C. Rice, and the command of the regiment upon myself.

We remained in our position until the next morning about 8 a. m., when we were relieved by Colonel Hayes, Eighteenth Massachusetts. We were then moved to the right about three-eighths of a mile, and formed in line of battle, the Sixteenth Michigan on our left and the Twentieth Maine on our right.

I regret to add that in addition to Captain Larrabee, whose death I have already noted, the officers are called upon to mourn the loss of First Lieutenant Eugene L. Dunham, Company D, a brave and efficient officer, who was instantly killed during the heavy firing from the enemy in our front. Capt. William R. Bourne, Company K; Capt. Bennett Munger, Company C; Adjt. George B. Herendeen; First Lieut. Charles H. Zeilman, commanding Company F, and Second Lieut. Benjamin N. Thomas, Company K, were wounded, the latter, it is feared, mortally.

It affords me great pleasure to be able to state that both officers and men behaved with the greatest coolness and bravery, not a single case of cowardice having come to my ear.

REPORT OF CAPT. ORPHEUS S. WOODWARD,

EIGHTY-THIRD PENNSYLVANIA INFANTRY.

Near Emmitsburg, Md., July 6, 1863.

In compliance with orders from headquarters Third Brigade, First Division, Fifth Corps, I have the honor to report the following as the operations of my command during the battle of the 2d, 3d, 4th and 5th instant.

On the morning of the 2d instant, moved to the front. At about 2:30 p. m. was ordered into position on our extreme left, the Forty-fourth New York on my right, the Twentieth Maine on my left. At 3:15 p. m. the enemy advanced and engaged my skirmishers, pressing on in force, with bayonets fixed. They soon drove in my skirmishers and engaged my regiment, posted behind rocks and stones hastily thrown up for defense. The contest continued lively until nearly 6 p. m., when the enemy fell back. I instantly threw forward a strong line of skirmishers, who captured between 50 and 60 prisoners and 200 stand of arms.

My men and officers acted splendidly. Where all did so well, I cannot discriminate.

My loss amounted to 10 killed and 45 wounded.

At 1:30 a. m. on the 3d, moved to the support of the Twentieth Maine, which had succeeded in taking a high hill

a little to the left of my former position. Remained here until 10 a. m., when, being relieved by a regiment of the Pennsylvania Reserves, rejoined my brigade, massed in the woods, just at the right of General Sykes' headquarters. Here I remained until 12 m., the 4th, when the brigade was thrown forward on a reconnaissance. We moved out, and occupied the position occupied by the enemy the previous day; threw forward skirmishers, but found no opposing force within 2 miles. I deem it but proper to state that but for the prompt and skillful disposition made by Colonel Vincent of the troops under his command (the Third Brigade), the enemy would have succeeded in turning our left.

I regret to state that Colonel Vincent was severely wounded. My command (his regiment) esteemed him highly as a gentleman, scholar, and soldier, and bitterly avenged his injury.

REPORT OF GEN. ROMEYN B. AYRES,

COMMANDING SECOND DIVISION, FIFTH ARMY CORPS,
JULY 28, 1863.

"Rebellion Records," Series 1, Vol. *27*, page 634.

EXTRACT.

* * * In the afternoon, the enemy's attack on the left of our position being developed, the division, *preceded by the First Division*, was marched to the support of our troops engaged, the Third Brigade being placed in position on the general line of battle upon a rocky hill (usually called Round Top hill) of great importance, facing the Emmitsburg and Gettysburg pike. This brigade was ordered to hold this hill, which duty it performed well and effectually. * * *

REPORT OF COL. KENNER GARRARD,

COMMANDING THIRD BRIGADE, SECOND DIV., FIFTH A. C.
AT BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG
AFTER DEATH OF GENERAL WEED.

"Rebellion Records," Series 1, Vol. 27, Part 1, page 651.

EXTRACT.

* * * At this point the leading regiment, under the direction of General Warren, chief engineer Army of the Potomac, was led to the left, up on what is known as Round Top ridge. Hazlett's Battery ascended the ridge immediately in rear of this regiment (the One hundred and fortieth New York Volunteers, Col. P. H. O'Rorke commanding), and went into battery on the summit. The One hundred and fortieth was formed in line, and was immediately closely engaged with the enemy at short musket range on the left slope of the ridge.

A portion of the First Division, Fifth Army Corps (Vincent's Brigade. O. W. N.), was engaged to the left of the ridge, and this regiment and Hazlett's Battery were brought up to assist the First Division in repelling a heavy assault of the enemy, with the evident design of gaining this ridge. Colonel O'Rorke was mortally wounded at the head of his regiment while leading it into action.

The other regiments, One hundred and forty-sixth New York Volunteers and the Ninety-first and One hundred and fifty-fifth Pennsylvania Volunteers, were led to the right and front some distance, and formed in line in a narrow valley to support a portion of the Third Corps and Watson's Battery, then severely pressed by the enemy. Before becoming engaged, however, orders were received for these regiments to return at double-quick to Round Top ridge, and secure and hold that position. The Ninety-first was posted on the left of the battery, connecting with the One hundred and fortieth. The One hundred and forty-sixth and One hundred and fifty-fifth were posted on the right, extending from the battery on the summit, along the crest of the ridge, to the gorge on the right.

* * * When the brigade and Hazlett's Battery seized the ridge, it was done under a heavy musketry fire, and was

entirely unoccupied, *excepting by a part of the First Division* (Third Brigade under Vincent. O. W. N.), on the extreme left, and I am gratified to report to the general commanding the division that *the order to secure and hold the ridge was faithfully executed.*

COMMENTS ON OFFICIAL REPORTS.

In reports marked "extract," portions in relation to preliminary movements and in some cases recommendations of officers for good conduct and matters purely formal are omitted, but all which relates directly to the subject of this paper is given as reported by the several officers.

General Sykes

States that he posted Sweitzer's and Tilton's brigades of the First Division himself. He says that "In the meantime, Vincent's brigade, of this division, had seized the rocky height, closely followed by Weed's brigade, Second Division. These troops were posted under the direction of General Warren, Chief Engineer of this army." If by "these troops" General Sykes means to include Vincent's brigade, it appears to be an error. There seems to be no reference to Warren in any of the reports of Vincent's brigade and no evidence that Warren at any time went farther to the south than the ground occupied by the One hundred and fortieth New York of Weed's brigade.

The statement that Weed's brigade had been taken away from its position on the hill by order of General Sickles and ordered by General Sykes to return and reoccupy that position is not confirmed by the report of Colonel Garrard, who assumed command when General Weed fell, and made the report for the brigade after the battle. He must have been present and could hardly have failed to notice this change of position. It seems more probable that General Sykes had ordered the brigade to the hill before he went to the rear to bring up the Third Division and finding on his return that General Weed with all his regiments except the One hundred and fortieth New York were marching to the front by order of General Sickles, ordered them back to the position which he had previously assigned to them.

General Barnes.

This officer's report was not made until August 24, nearly two months after the battle and then only after the receipt of positive instructions to make his report. It is a long document, composed largely of verbatim copies of the reports of his subordinate officers. It seems evident from the reports of his brigade commanders that they received very little assistance from him during the battle. General Sykes says that he personally posted the First and Second Brigades. The Third Brigade was removed from his immediate command and asked and received no advice or assistance from the Division commander. Barnes says that he was with General Sykes when General Warren applied to the latter for troops to occupy Round Top, that Sykes yielded to Warren's urgent request and that he (Barnes) immediately directed Colonel Vincent, commanding the Third Brigade, to proceed to that point with his brigade. In view of the writer's certain knowledge of the conversation between Colonel Vincent and the officer of General Sykes' staff and the enquiry of that officer for the whereabouts of General Barnes, the only plausible explanation of Barnes' statement is that General Sykes' aide found Barnes after leaving Vincent and Barnes sent the order after Vincent and his brigade had gone.

Some important discrepancies are found between General Barnes' report of the orders given and movements made by the First and Second brigades and reports of these movements made by the brigade commanders, some of which will be specified in comments on the Brigade Reports. Reading between the lines, it appears that Barnes' action as division commander was not efficient and did not inspire great confidence in him in the minds of any of his brigade commanders. Orders which he claims to have given in regard to some of the movements of the brigades are reported by Colonel Tilton and Colonel Sweitzer to have been made under their own initiative and when they finally reached their last position they reported directly to the Corps commander. General Barnes says that "Being disabled for further actual command of the division, the opportune arrival of General Griffin enabled me to relinquish

it to him, and the division moved toward Middletown, where it arrived July 8." He does not say what caused his disability. The only reference to him which writer has been able to find in the official reports, is that in 1864 he was relieved from duty on court martial and assigned to the command of a prisoners' camp at Point Lookout.

Colonel Tilton

After describing the position taken by his brigade and the attack on his front, states that "General Barnes ordered me to fall back in good order if unable to hold the position." He makes no mention of an order from General Barnes to change his front to repel the attack on his flank. Finding that the enemy was in great force on his right and rear, he made several changes of position apparently without orders from General Barnes, and at last, after crossing an open field, took up a new position upon the right of the Second Division, *and reported to General Sykes.*

Colonel Sweitzer,

After detailing the various movements of his brigade, some by the direction of General Barnes and others by his own orders, in extricating his men from their perilous position, he adds these significant words: "About dark on the evening of the 2nd, the Acting Assistant Adjutant General of the First Brigade came to me and enquired for General Barnes; said he was directed by General Sykes to tell him to have the Second Brigade form on the right of the First, in the position they then were. As General Barnes was not present, I received the order, and put the Second Brigade in the position indicated, where we remained until the evening of the 5th, when the division advanced toward Emmitsburg." From this it would appear that at the close of the battle on the second day General Barnes was not present or in communication with any of the brigades of his division. From his conduct as reported by the commanders of the First and Second brigades, the reader may judge what would have been the result if Vincent had waited for an order from him before moving his brigade to Little Round Top.

As his report and those of his regimental commanders show so clearly the importance of the part taken by this brigade in securing the victory as Gettysburg, they are given in full. It will be noticed that neither Colonel Rice nor any of the regimental commanders make any reference to General Warren having conducted them to this position or taken any part in posting the brigade. The report of Colonel Chamberlain graphically describes the fighting of his splendid regiment. The promotion of Colonel Rice to be Brigadier-General and his transfer to another corps, left Colonel Chamberlain in command of this famous brigade and with his Twentieth Maine, the Eighty-third Pennsylvania, and other regiments which had been added to the command later in the war, Chamberlain commanded the force which received the formal surrender of Lee's army at Appomattox. The brief reports of Lieutenant-Colonel Conner of the Forty-fourth New York and Captain Woodward of the Eighty-third Pennsylvania, are scarcely adequate to measure the splendid fighting of these regiments. The report of Lieutenant-Colonel Welch of the Sixteenth Michigan contains some statements which are not confirmed either by the brigade commander or the commanders of the other regiments. He says, "About 4 p. m. we moved rapidly to the extreme left of our line of battle, and went into position on the left of the brigade, at that time circling the crest of a high, rocky hill. After deploying two of my largest companies as skirmishers—Brady's Sharpshooters from the left, and Company A from the right—I was ordered at double-quick to the right of the brigade, and to take my position on the right of the Forty-fourth New York. Before this could be accomplished, we were under a heavy fire of the enemy's infantry. We succeeded, however, in securing our places after some loss." This statement does not appear to be in accordance with the facts. When the brigade neared the position assigned to it, marching in column of fours, the Forty-fourth New York headed the column, followed by the Sixteenth Michigan, the Eighty-third Pennsylvania next, the Twentieth Maine bringing up the rear. At the request of Colonel Rice that the

Forty-fourth New York and Eighty-third Pennsylvania might fight side by side, as they had in all previous engagements, Colonel Vincent assented, and directed the Sixteenth to pass the Forty-fourth. This may have been done at the double-quick, but no skirmishers were thrown out at that time by the Sixteenth Michigan and probably at no time during the battle, as the ground in their front was open to the foot of the hill. As soon as the Sixteenth Michigan was in place the other regiments followed, taking position on the left in the following order: Forty-fourth New York, Eighty-third Pennsylvania and Twentieth Maine on the left. The brigade was all in position before a soldier of the enemy had been seen. The skirmishers thrown out by the Eighty-third and Forty-fourth advanced some distance before a shot was fired by either side. The Sixteenth Michigan was fully in place and at least two heavy assaults had been repulsed by the other regiments before the Sixteenth Michigan had received a shot from the direction of its front. After the attacks by the five Alabama regiments had been repulsed from our center, the Texas regiments of Robertson's brigade passed north on the left of Law to a point some distance beyond the Sixteenth Michigan, then advanced in heavy force against that regiment. Its right wing fell back in disorder, while the left held fast. The Texans were within our lines for a few moments, when the timely arrival of the One hundred and fortieth New York and their charge down the slope, caused the enemy to retire, and our line was re-established. In his attempt to stop the retreat of Welch's men, Colonel Vincent was mortally wounded. Welch further states, "We remained in this position nearly half an hour, when some one (supposed to be General Weed or Major-General Sykes) called from the extreme crest of the hill to fall back nearer the top, where a much less exposed line could be taken up. This order was not obeyed, except by single individuals. From some misconstruction of orders, and entirely unwarrantable assumption of authority, Lieutenant Kydd ordered the colors back. None left with them, however, but three of the color-guard. They followed the brigade colors to where Colonel Vincent, after being wounded, had been carried, where they remained all night,

joining the regiment in the morning, with 45 men, who had left the field during and after the fight. All the remainder of the regiment retained their position until relieved." This is a remarkable statement evidently made to account for the unsoldierly conduct of the portion of the Sixteenth Michigan and its commanding officer. It is certain that neither General Sykes nor General Weed was near that position at that time. He makes no mention of the presence of the One hundred and fortieth New York with Colonel O'Rorke at its head, which charged down the hill and repulsed the enemy which had driven back the right of Welch's regiment. It is certain that Welch with his 45 men did not follow the brigade colors at that time to the house where Vincent was carried, because the brigade colors did not leave the hill until the fighting was all over, when the writer, who carried those colors, was sent to the rear by Colonel Rice to get assistance for our wounded. It is certain that Colonel Welch told the writer near the farm house where Vincent lay, that the brigade had been driven off the hill and he did not know where it was. It is probable that Welch with a part of his regiment sought safety in the rear of the ridge, and went with his men nearly a mile from the scene of the fight of his brigade and remained until morning.

It is significant that in his report Colonel Rice commended for their gallant conduct Colonel Chamberlain and Adjutant Chamberlain of the Twentieth Maine, Lieutenant-Colonel Conner and Major Knox of the Forty-fourth New York, Captain Woodward, commanding Eighty-third Pennsylvania, and Adjutant Gifford of that regiment, but in the Sixteenth Michigan mentions only Captain Elliott and Adjutant Jacklin, omitting any reference to Lieutenant-Colonel Welch.

Colonel Rice in his kindness of heart seems to have accepted the statement made by Colonel Welch in his report, but could not commend his conduct. Possibly as he was engaged with his own regiment at the time this break occurred he had no personal knowledge of the facts. Welch continued in command of the regiment and in subsequent battles acted well.

Colonel Vincent gave up his life here, but his brigade, with the assistance of the One hundred and fortieth New

York led by the gallant Colonel O'Rorke, maintained its position until the end.

In 1901 the writer sent substantially the same statement, in regard to Vincent's conduct at Gettysburg, to each of the officers named below, and received letters in reply with permission to publish them, from which the following extracts are made:

FROM MAJOR-GENERAL DANIEL BUTTERFIELD.

CHIEF OF STAFF, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC AT GETTYSBURG.

Hotel Royal Palm, Miami, Florida, February 19, 1901.

No man who lived and fought in the battle of Gettysburg did more for his country than Vincent. I knew the whole matter from beginning to end. He was a magnificent soldier, a gentleman of high education and great ability.

General Tremain brought messages to General Meade and to me from the field, describing the exigency and great need for the immediate occupation of Round Top, and authority was given him to send the troops there. In my judgment there was not another command on the field which could have been more effective in the matter of time and rapidity of movement in getting to the spot in time to have saved the day, owing to its wonderful efficiency, drill and discipline under Vincent, who had been trained and educated with it.

FROM DANIEL E. SICKLES, MAJ.-GEN., U. S. V.

COMMANDING THIRD ARMY CORPS AT GETTYSBURG.

New York, November 21, 1901.

Colonel Vincent's part in the operations of that day, on the left of the Union lines, was distinguished by excellent judgment, prompt movements and signal gallantry, for which he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General, before his death, on the 7th of the month. My own command, the Third Army Corps, was engaged in the immediate vicinity, and I had, therefore, an opportunity of observing

Vincent's fight and can speak of it from personal knowledge. There is no doubt that the repulse of Lee's assault on our left flank, on the 2d of July, '63, saved the Union army from defeat at Gettysburg. This was accomplished by the Third and Fifth Corps and Caldwell's division of the Second Corps. I have always regarded General Vincent's co-operation as worthy of all praise.

FROM JOSHUA L. CHAMBERLAIN,
BREVET MAJOR-GENERAL, U. S. V.
COLONEL COMMANDING 20TH MAINE VOLUNTEERS AT GETTYSBURG.

Portland, Maine, November 18, 1901.

Col. Vincent's conduct in taking his brigade to Little Round Top and placing it in position, and in throwing his great personal energy and determination into the fight there, are personally well known to me. I regard the timely occupation of that position, which was at that stage of the battle the key of the Union defense, as due to the energy and skill of Colonel Vincent.

FROM HENRY E. TREMAIN,
BREVET BRIGADIER GENERAL, U. S. V.

New York, November 23, 1901.

Upon reading the foregoing, I recall many reasons besides your own valuable testimony for believing that the account is correct, and that too much recognition cannot be given by this country to the skill and heroism of General Vincent's supreme effort and sacrifice.

FROM GENERAL ELLIS SPEAR.
MAJOR 20TH MAINE VOLUNTEERS AT GETTYSBURG.

Washington, D. C., November 23rd, 1901.

I have read carefully the foregoing statement in regard to General Vincent's services at Gettysburg. As to the greater part of the statement, I know of my own knowledge that it is strictly accurate. What happened on the

right of the brigade when Vincent was mortally wounded, I did not see, being then with the 20th Maine closely engaged on the left, but it was a matter of common report at the time, and beyond question the statement is strictly accurate. I had seen General Vincent in battle before and knew what he would do then. He was a very valuable officer and of great promise, and his death was a great loss to the army, but the success he achieved in averting the imminent and great danger on the left at Gettysburg on the second day of the battle, was worth what it cost, though the price was great.

FROM GENERAL JAMES LONGSTREET, C. S. A.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 6, 1901.

It gives me pleasure to state in reference to the worth of Little Round Top to the Union army at Gettysburg, it was everything to the success of the Union battle. General Vincent's prompt action in moving to save that point, held it, and was the means of getting the battle to his side. Many minutes delay would have given the Confederates the field.

Position of Eighty-third Pennsylvania Volunteers on Little Round Top, Gettysburg.

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